



Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture

Date: Thursday, September 7, 2023

Time: 7:00-8:30p

Zoom

Agenda

Attending: Stewart Ikeda, Steve Poltorzycki, Nicole Cuff, Christine Noah, Tom Formicola, Lidia Kenig-Scher

Absent: Brian McMurray, Sarah Morgan-Wu, Beth Locke, Cristin Canterbury Bagnall,

Guests: Katie Luczai, Cecily Miller, Anna Litten, Terry Holt

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm.

August Minutes were approved unanimously without changes. Stewart Ikeda abstained as he was absent from the last meeting.

Christine will take minutes today.

DPCD & Chair Updates: Meet **Katie Luczai**, DPCD

- Katie introduced herself. She has held a variety of municipal roles across different cities and towns. She's also passionate about theater.
- She's excited to be on board and would love to chat with folks if they have ideas! Her email address is KLuczai@town.arlington.ma.us.
- Katie can help us reserve rooms / space for future ACAC meetings, both in-person and hybrid. We're planning for the October meeting to be in-person.
- The ACAC DEIA Working Group offers the MCC-subsidized **optional**, self-guided at-your-own-pace virtual learning series, [Cultural Equity Learning Consortium 3](#), for cultural sector workers and organizations committed to diversity, equity, accessibility and antiracism.
 - It's 12 independent online lessons available to ACAC committees, plus one live wrap-up meeting on January 31.

- There is an opportunity to be matched up with peers either as organizations or as individuals.
 - Stewart can speak to people about this offline if anyone has questions.
- The ACAC DEIA Working Group will be regrouping soon, so if anyone is interested in participating / attending meetings, please reach out to Stewart.

Updates: Town Day & Community Engagement

- **Town Day is Sept. 23, 10:30AM-4:30PM.** Reminder that hands are still needed for light-lift shifts on Town Day's Plein Aire Festival.
- Cecily has asked the interns Greta and Clara to help out at the booth.
 - We're ordering a variety of stickers to hand out at the booth.
- **Utility Boxes:** This Saturday from 3-4:30pm is the Utility Box Reception at the Jason Russell House during the beer garden. Feel free to show up in support! Contact Laurie Bogdan with questions.
- **Murals Project:** We still don't have an answer on the mural from the landlords of the Roasted Granola building.

Discussion & Vote: Co-Chair

- **Steve Poltorzycki:** The Commission expressed its deep gratitude to Steve Poltorzycki, one of the longest-serving commissioners, from the earliest days of the Arts & Culture plan, even before ACAC had taken its current form. Steve has alternately served as Treasurer and Co-Chair, and played key roles in Fundraising, the Murals Steering Committee and other roles, in addition to serving on ATED, and important Arts & Cultural roles in other town around the region. Steve announced his intention to step down as co-chair due to other obligations, and along with Stewart offered his endorsement of Christine Noah to take his place.
- **Christine Noah** made remarks on her interest in serving as Co-Chair.
- Christine was elected unanimously. Woohoo!

Discussion: ACD, APS Engagement & Collaboration

- **Cultural District:** The reapplication is complete and the boundaries of the Arlington Cultural District (ACD) have been officially expanded to the Arlington High School (AHS) neighborhood, with new map brochures to be developed. Town GIS is interested in helping with a new map as well.
 - *VisitArlington* will feature an ad for the Cultural District audio tour and feature article about Climate Futures.
 - We are ordering more signage for this fall.
 - We'll be receiving \$15K from MCC again this year for CD funding, and we have some additional funding that we have not used from the Cultural Sector Recovery grant.

- We are interested in reengaging our CD Managing Partners, perhaps through a special meeting time, to get them excited again about participating in the life of the CD, especially as we move towards Menotomy250.
- **Engagement with APS and other school collaborations.** Gracie James' family has indicated they may be interested in providing funding for a few more years, but we know the new school arts leadership is not as interested in the Youth Banners project.
 - Gracie James' family also wants an update on the Youth Banners project from last year.
 - How else could we collaborate with APS or leverage funding from Gracie James' family?
 - AHS has an interest in a mural, either indoors or outdoors. We could potentially position this as a longer-form funding opportunity that would also serve as a memorial to Gracie James.
 - There is a new amphitheater space at the high school and there's a new head of performing arts, so perhaps there are opportunities for busking or live performance?
 - We should have a conversation with Leo about this, at a smaller level (with leadership). Cecily volunteered to be part of this conversation. Brainstorming would be a good first step.
 - We could also see if the students have ideas. We would need to figure out how to engage them around this.
 - We could support an artist-in-residence who could work with the students on a mural. It could be a non-permanent option so that it could be removed after a year or so and provide opportunities for future students.
 - Projects in schools succeed or fail based on the enthusiasm of a champion who is in the school (like a teacher). We should find out who those champions are.
 - The lawn at the high school is beautiful. Maybe we could propose a large sculpture that could go there, or something for the outside space. It could be created communally like the plarn figures in Persistence.
 - Maybe Tom and Kat could also attend.
 - Start with them and their ideas but offer up our ideas if they ask for guidance.
 - Projects should also come from the artist we involve and what they're interested in / passionate about.
 - We could try out "test" projects to see what excites people and explore other opportunities.
 - Doing some projects that engage the performance spaces in the high school might be a good path to being able to use them in the future.
 - Could we get an endorsement from Tino D'Agostino?
 - Giving youth a voice in an adult-dominated space (the Town) is important. That's something we can lean on in terms of the value proposition for this partnership.

- There are also other schools in town we don't currently engage with. Could we involve them or their students?
- The library welcomes and aims to engage all students in town regardless of school. There could be opportunities for collaboration there. APL has a new teen director who is launching a teen advisory board.
- Should we have a teen commissioner on ACAC? Or a parent or other stakeholder connected to the schools? Lidia volunteered to be a liaison.
- Next steps are to meet with Leo. Cecily, Tom, and Lidia volunteered to participate. We should also meet with the performing arts contingent. Nicole and Cristin could attend.
- We could do other types of banner projects with adult participants or other community members, as a way to keep that banner space.
- Youth Banners is a lot of money and administration, so if we decide to do it again we need to keep that in mind.
 - Would Dave Ardito be interested in leading that artistically?
 - Maybe Adria and Sarah could meet with Community Engagement to discuss?

New Business

We anticipate being down multiple commissioner roles so members should be on the lookout for new candidates and send in suggestions for outreach.

ACA events: Jug Band Festival at the Arlington Beer Garden on Sept 30, with lectures and instrument-making. New exhibit opening on October 12 called Future Illustrated. Open Studios will be Sunday, Nov. 12.

Next meeting will be in-person on Thursday, October 5 from 7:00-8:30p. Location TBD.